

Beaufort Need-based Roundtable Fall 2006

1. What is the profile of the neediest students at your institution?

- Financial Aid is the first question students ask
- Cost of Attendance minus EFC minus Estimated Aid = Financial Need
- Lack knowledge about college
- Nervous about sharing information with college. There is a mistrust there.
- Need to balance school, work, and life
- Population is afraid of debt
- What position will the student be in after college with a lot of debt?
- If student works it could mean financial aid is reduced
- Don't have advocates
- No family support
- Neediest students may not receive Pell but still have considerable need after scholarships and grants have been applied to package
- Some students use loans instead of working. This allows them to concentrate on studies
- Students come to college after working in high school. The family needs the income to survive. Working in high school may reduce financial aid received in college.
- Parents do not qualify for PLUS loans due to credit score.
- Investment income keeps county from receiving grants. May want to look at weekly wage. The average weekly wage in the Low Country is 11% below state average and 22% below national average.
- Need to educate population about college and the financial aid process
- Population does not like debt and does not want to have to pay back loans.
- Need-based Grant recipients do not retain Grant because of credit hour requirement.
- There are a lot of students with young children that do not qualify for aid
- Military
- Some students work two jobs
- Transportation is an issue in a rural area
- First Generation
- Most students commute instead of living on campus
- Low income
- Apply late and aid is already disbursed

2 . How do we allow the neediest students access to colleges and universities in South Carolina?

- Academic Preparation
 - Disconnect between high school graduation requirements and College Admission requirements
 - Look at Tech Prep courses taken in High School
 - Pathways to Success Curriculum
- The General Assembly needs to better fund high education institutions so tuition does not keep going up.
- The Need-based Grant needs to be better funded. There is too much money in merit-based aid
- SC needs to look at funding in higher education so we can compete in the global marketplace.
- Students are told in high school that if they take certain courses they will get into college. This is not true.
- Build better partnerships with local high schools and Adult Education
- Does family value education? Does education help with success?
- Two-year institutions have open enrollment and give students a chance at higher education.
- If we do not allow access to higher education it will hurt SC in economic development and the quality of life.
- There is a misperception in the General Assembly that scholarships fund higher education.
- All of the State's attention goes to merit-based aid.

3 . What aid is available for our neediest students?

- Pell Grant
- Loans
- Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant
- Academic Competitiveness Grant and SMART Grant: Must have Pell Grant eligibility and meet academic criteria to receive
- Need to believe in student
- President Bush indicated the US need to invest in human capital.
- Have matching program where institutions match the State funds with institutional dollars.
- Access and Equity money: some schools match it.
- Need to educate population about FAFSA
- The students, high school, parents, and community need to know about college and its processes
- Some institutions have said "It is nice to help needy students attend school".
- Have community match additional NBG dollars
- Secretary Spellings Report

1. Shorter FAFSA: similar to 1040EZ
2. Let high school students know financial aid award in Spring of senior year
3. Increase Pell by \$6 billion in 5 years

4 . How do we retain the State's neediest students at the colleges and universities in South Carolina?

- Provide information on college and financial aid prior to high school
- Needs are not always financial
- "Fit for College" by Sallie Mae is a good program
- Academic Success Center
- Small schools know their students. They also know who is in class and who is not and can follow-up with student.
- Need funding for support programs
- College Awareness Program in middle school
- Educate students and families about financial aid
- Office of Support Programs serves students with family income between \$24,000 and \$27,000. Students in the \$27,000 to \$35,000 range still have great need. These students must wait tables to receive help.

5 . Are there special programs targeted at this population?

- TRIO, GEAR-UP, College Goal Sunday, OSP
- Boys and Girls Club
- Most programs end after outside funding is used.
- Evaluate programs based upon retention of students
- Money is needed for students and programs
- Matching funds

6 . How can the State better serve our neediest students?

- Believe in the student
- Increase Access & Equity funding
 1. Develop program that follows student all the way to graduation
- Funding for partnerships
- Better communication between high schools and colleges
- Include financial aid literacy in Act 38 (Financial Literacy Bill)
- Local Gear-Up Grant
- Increase academic rigor
- Institutions have unique missions and can reach their communities better than State
- Flexibility
- Summer Disbursement of NBG

- Change name of Need-based Grant. There is a stigma attached to need-based.
- Put a “face” on NBG
- Make sure student believes he/she can succeed
- Engage parents
- Look at other states such as IN, MI, and TX